(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Explosive in the material left by army at repair shop at Pokhran

†1100. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the repair work of defence vehicles and other material in Pokhran field firing range is carried out in the local market at Pokhran;

(b) whether some material for repair work was forcibly left by the armymen with Mr. Zahoor Mohammed, the blacksmith, at Pokhran on 28th January, 2006 inspite of Mr. Zahoor Mohammed's refusal;

(c) whether the officers of field firing range received any information regarding presence of some explosive in that material and death of Shri Zahoor Mohammed; and

(d) if so, the action taken thereon and if not, the persons responsible in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) No, Sir. Army vehicles are routinely repaired in Army Workshops. Army convoys moving on National Highway passing through Pokhran carry repair and recovery detachments. However, single administrative vehicles breaking down on National Highways may be getting minor repairs done from the civil market.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Does not arise in view of reply to (b) above.

Operational field firing ranges

1101. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether out of more than 90 Field Firing Ranges only 40 are now operational affecting the army's training programmes;

(b) whether the Ministry of Environment and Forests has barred opening up of any additional Field Firing Range due to perceived threat to flora and fauna of the region where such FFRs are to be located; and

(c) whether the army is now scouting for barren and rocky patches of land to locate additional FFRs which may not cause much environment damage?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) At present, 40 Field Firing Ranges (FFRs) are available to the Army for training and field firing. Availability of adequate number of FFRs is essential for the maintenance of the training standards in the Army.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.